

Dinogorgon

Dinogorgon is a genus of gorgonopsid from the Late Permian of South Africa and Tanzania. The generic name *Dinogorgon* is derived from Greek, meaning "terrible gorgon", while its species name *rubidgei* is taken from the surname of renowned Karoo paleontologist, Professor Bruce Rubidge, who has contributed to much of the research conducted on therapsids of the Karoo Basin. The type species of the genus is *D. rubidgei*.

Dinogorgon is part of the gorgonopsian subfamily *Rubidgeinae*, a derived group of large-bodied gorgonopsians restricted to the Late Permian (Lopingian). The *Rubidgeinae* subfamily first appeared in the *Tropidostoma* Assemblage Zone, and reached their highest diversity in the *Cistecephalus* and *Daptocephalus* assemblage zones of the Beaufort Group in South Africa^{[1][2][3][4]}.

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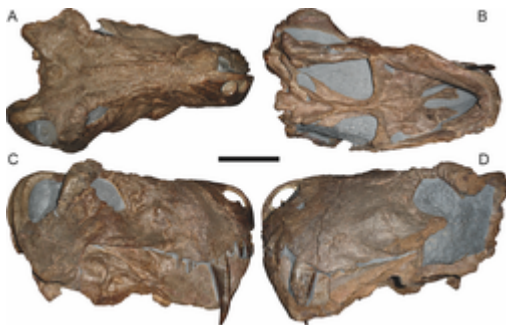
Description

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History of discovery



Holotype of *D. quinquemolaris*, a synonym of *D. rubidgei*

The type species of *Dinogorgon rubidgei* was discovered on Wellwood farm, a farm owned by the grandfather of Bruce Rubidge, Sidney H. Rubidge, outside of Graaff-Reinet. The fossil

<i>Dinogorgon</i>												
Temporal range: Late Permian												
~259–254 Ma												
	PreЄ	Є	OS	D	C	P	T	J	K	PgN		
Holotype skull of <i>D. rubidgei</i>												
Scientific classification												
Kingdom:	Animalia											
Phylum:	Chordata											
Clade:	Therapsida											
Family:	†Gorgonopsidae											
Tribe:	†Rubidgeini											
Genus:	† <i>Dinogorgon</i> Broom 1936											
Type species												
† <i>Dinogorgon rubidgei</i> Broom 1936												
Synonyms												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Dinogorgon quinquemolaris</i> Huene 1950 ■ <i>Dinogorgon oudebergensis</i> Brink & Kitching 1953 ■ <i>Prorubidgea robusta</i> Brink & Kitching 1953 ■ <i>Rubidgea quinquemolaris</i> Gebauer 2007 												

was likely recovered by Haughton himself sometime in the 1930s or 1940s, and were only described by British paleontologist, Sidney H. Haughton, and James Kitching between 1953 and 1965^{[5][6][7]}.

Description

Dinogorgon was one of the smaller species of rubidgeinae, with the largest specimens only measuring at 2m (6.6 ft). Nevertheless, it was still a formidable predator, and likely preyed on reptiles and smaller therapsids^{[8][9]}. Like more derived rubidgeines, *Dinogorgon* had a number of bosses on its skull, likely to reduce the stresses caused by struggling prey. Its snout was deep but narrow, similar to *Aelurognathus*^[10], but narrower than *Rubidgea* and *Clelandina*. It had 4 to 5 upper and lower postcanine teeth, which further distinguishes it from *Rubidgea*^{[11][12]}. Three subspecies are currently recognised in the genus: *D. rubidgei*, *D. quinquemolaris*, and *D. pricei*.

Classification

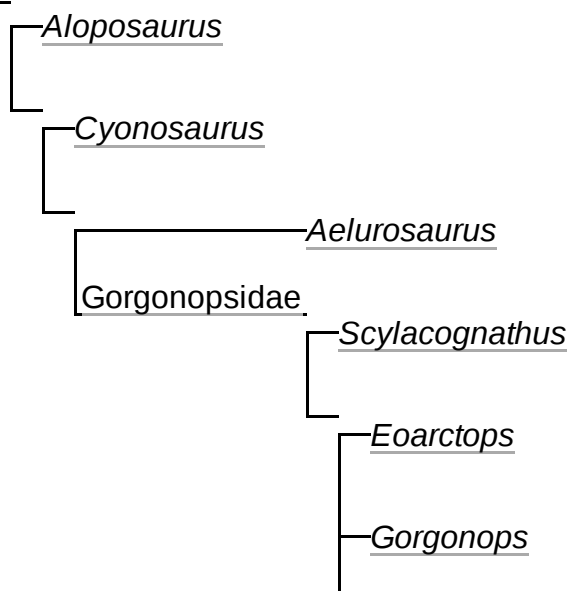
The Rubidgeinae are a subfamily of derived gorgonopsids that have only been found in Africa. They are composed of six genera and 17 species. The Rubidgeinae are closely related to their sister group, the Inostranceviinae, which have only been found in Russia. Out of the gorgonopsian clade, the systematics of the Rubidgeinae are the best resolved due to their distinctive character traits. The systematics of other gorgonopsian subfamilies remain chaotic due to a high degree of cranial homomorphism between taxa, making it difficult to distinguish different taxa effectively^{[13][14][15][16][17]}.

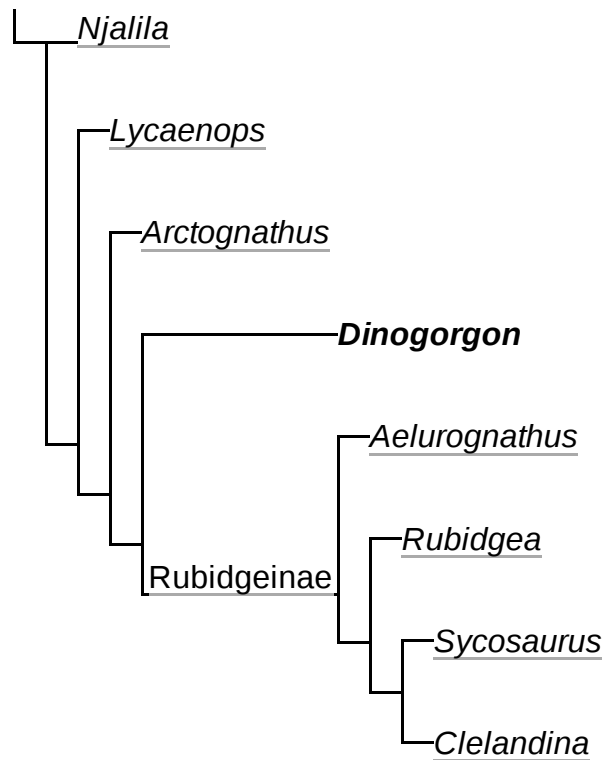


Restoration of *D. rubidgei*

Dinogorgon shares many characteristics with *Rubidgea* and *Clelandina*, which has led some authors to synonymize them. All three are now considered to be part of the same tribe, Rubidgeini, rather than the same genus. The cladogram below (Kammerer et al. 2016) displays currently accepted systematic relationships of the Gorgonopsia.

Gorgonopsia





Correlation

Numerous therapsid species, including rubidgeinae gorgonopsids, are used as biostratigraphic markers in other African basins, such as the Upper Madumabisa Mudstone of Zambia, the Usili Formation of Tanzania, and the Chiweta Beds of Malawi^[18].

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